

**Issue Paper**  
**Project Inspector Eligibility: Qualifications for Certification**

**ISSUE:**

The DSA is seeking changes to the project inspector eligibility criteria to strengthen construction oversight of public school projects and improve project certification.

Existing eligibility requirements are less stringent than those in similar programs such as that of the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD). Current qualification parameters emphasize construction trades experience while there are documentation and administrative duties of DSA-certified project inspectors that may not be related to such experience. Furthermore, the regulations lack definition of inspector qualifications creating uncertainties with DSA process for admittance of inspectors to certification exams.

**BACKGROUND**

The DSA presented its original proposal at the February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012 meeting of the Committee and received positive feedback as well as input on the proposal. Additional written input and the Committee's discussions were incorporated into revised drafts presented on March 15, 2012 and April 30, 2012.

At the April meeting, the Committee requested the DSA to consider the experience of assistant inspectors as one of the qualifications for inspector exam. Additionally, the Committee pointed out that possession of special inspection certificate in masonry, steel or concrete construction may be insufficient for qualification without corresponding experience in such types of construction. Lastly, the DSA received input at the meeting and written comments with a suggestion to supplement Class A inspector certification from Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) with experience in project inspection as a Class A inspector on hospital projects.

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES:**

Based on the input received at the April meeting of the Committee, the DSA amended the proposal with the following provisions:

- For qualifications related to building code enforcement inspection and certification, the DSA added the words "commercial combination." This will ensure that the certification applies to commercial, rather than residential construction with a combination of trades and not just electrical or mechanical inspection certification.
- The DSA added assistant inspector experience as qualification criteria for Class 1 and Class 2 inspector examinations.
- The DSA removed its proposal for allowing OSHPD Class A certification as admittance criteria to DSA Class 1 inspector exam for further study.
- The DSA removed references to specialty inspection certificates from Class 4 exam qualification criteria in response to comments that this is not sufficient for Class 4 exam admittance.

The DSA prepared a matrix table (attached) that summarizes the proposed qualification requirements by exam class. This table is intended to aid in the discussion of the proposal and does not replace the proposed regulation text.

**PROPOSED REGULATION CHANGES****(all new text, code section numbering to be determined):****Minimum qualifications for examination.**

An applicant shall not be less than 25 years of age, possess a high school diploma or equivalent, and shall meet the following minimum qualifications:

(a) For Class 1 inspector exam, one of the following:

1. Six years of experience as an architect's, engineer's, owner's, or local building official's representative in building code-enforcement inspection of non-residential construction with a valid certification as a commercial combination building inspector by a state- or nationally-recognized organization, as accepted by the DSA. [Note: Possession of a valid California registration as a structural engineer, civil engineer, or a valid California license as an architect may be substituted for four years of required experience.]; or,
2. Six years of qualifying experience as the lead project construction superintendent on:
  - a. new building public school construction projects subject to the requirements of Education Code sections 17280 or 81130, and these regulations; and/or,
  - b. construction of new hospital buildings as defined by Section 129725 of the Health and Safety Code;or,
3. Three years of qualifying experience as a DSA certified Class 2 project inspector and valid certification as a special inspector for steel, or concrete, or masonry construction by a state- or nationally-recognized organization, as accepted by the DSA, with two years of experience in special inspection.
4. Possession of certification as DSA Class 2 project inspector and four years of experience as an assistant project inspector in Class 1 school construction projects.

(b) For Class 2 inspector exam, one of the following:

1. Four years of experience as an architect's, engineer's, owner's, or local building official's representative in building code-enforcement inspection of non-residential construction with a valid certification as a commercial combination building inspector by a state- or nationally-recognized organization, as accepted by the DSA. [Note: Possession of a valid California registration as a structural engineer, civil engineer, or a valid California license as an architect may be substituted for three years of required experience.]; or,
2. Four years of qualifying experience as the lead project construction superintendent on:
  - a. new building public school construction projects subject to the requirements of Education Code sections 17280 or 81130, and these regulations; and/or,
  - b. construction of new hospital buildings as defined by Section 129725 of the Health and Safety Code;or,
3. Three years of qualifying experience as a DSA certified Class 3 project inspector.
4. Possession of certification as DSA Class 3 project inspector and four years of experience as an assistant project inspector in Class 2 school construction projects.

(c) For Class 3 inspector exam, one of the following:

1. Three years of experience as an architect's, engineer's, owner's, or local building official's representative in building code-enforcement inspection of non-residential construction with a valid certification as a commercial combination building inspector by a state- or nationally-recognized organization, as accepted by the DSA; or,
2. Possession of a valid California registration as a structural engineer, civil engineer, or a valid California license as an architect; or,
3. Four years of qualifying experience as the lead project construction superintendent [Note: Experience may be substituted with college education with major work in architecture, engineering, building inspection and/or construction on a year-for-year basis for a maximum of two years]; or,
4. Two years of qualifying experience as a DSA certified Class 4 project inspector and two years of college education with major work in architecture, engineering, building inspection and/or construction.

(d) For Class 4 inspector exam, one of the following:

1. Two years of experience as an architect's, engineer's, owner's, or local building official's representative in building code-enforcement inspection with a valid certification as a commercial combination building inspector by a state- or nationally-recognized organization, as accepted by the DSA; or,
2. Two years of qualifying experience as the lead project construction superintendent [Note: One year of experience may be substituted with one year of college education with major work in architecture, engineering, building inspection and/or construction]; or,
3. Four years of a relevant and varied construction experience at a minimum of journeyman level [Note: Experience may be substituted with college education with major work in architecture, engineering, building inspection and/or construction on a year-for-year basis for a maximum of two years]; or,
4. Valid certification as a building code-enforcement inspector by a state- or nationally-recognized organization, as accepted by the DSA, and three years of qualifying inspection experience. Certification and experience may be gained in building inspection or structural special inspection.

*Changes from the April 30, 2012 version are indicated as underlined text*

Exam Class	Inspection Experience (Building Code Enforcement)	Education & Licenses	Construction Experience	Experience as DSA certified project inspector	Special Inspection Certification
1	6 yrs. or 2 yrs. experience + engineer/architect license		6 yrs. Lead Project Superintendent: new school building projects or new hospital buildings	3 yrs. DSA Class 2 + masonry, steel, concrete special inspection certification <u>and 2 yrs. experience in special inspection</u> or <u>4 yrs. assistant inspector (Class 2 certified) experience in Class 1 school construction projects</u>	
	OSHPD Class A certification				
2	4 yrs. or 1 yr. experience + engineer/architect license		4 yrs. Lead Project Superintendent: new school building projects or new hospital buildings	3 yrs. DSA Class 3 or <u>4 yrs. assistant inspector (Class 3 certified) experience in Class 2 school construction projects</u>	
3	3 yrs.	Registered Engineer or Licensed Architect	4 yrs. Lead Project Superintendent or 2 yrs. experience + 2 yrs. education	2 yrs. DSA Class 4 + 2 yrs. Education	
4	2 yrs. (including inspection of residential construction)		2 yrs. Lead Project Superintendent or 1 yr experience + 2 yrs. education		Certification + 3 yrs. Experience
			4 yrs. Journeyman level or 2 yrs experience + 2 yrs education		